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## "PUCK",

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## THE CHURCH FAIR.

WE have nearly reached the season of church fairs. The treasury of the tabernacle is sadly empty, and the heads of the church look for its replenishment to the large class of young women, who, not having other employment, occupy their time as amateurs of religion.

These young women are of two varieties. Those of the episcopal denominations are generally of "high" tendencies, and go in heavily for clerical vestment, embroidery and altar-dressing. Those who belong to the evangelical party make a specialty of painting texts, brief but pious, on long slips of cardboard. But all meet on the common ground of the church-fair.

The average church-fair is an interesting study. Its birth is a process well worth watching. The Pastor of the church, after a private examination of the accounts, takes the initiatory steps. He goes, himself, or despatches his assistant, or his assistant's assistant, whichever is youngest, and best look—best calculated to excite religious enthusiasm in the feminine breast—among the young ladies of the flock, to stimulate them to the construction of inexpensive, yet gaudy knickknacks, to be sold by their makers at six or eight times their intrinsic value: the operation being quite free from any taint of dishonesty, in that it benefits "the Cause."

This year, to the usual horrors of pen-wipers and pin-cushions and God-bless-our-homes, will be added the misery of ceramics, and the man who is lured into the sacred bazaar will have to pay five dollars for a red clay jug disgraced beyond recognition by a pictorial delirium in black and ochre.

It is a cardinal point in the management of church fairs that the beauteous devotee should dispose of her own handiwork. When goods are to be sold at prices largely above their prices, it is necessary to throw in something to make up the deficiency. In such cases, it has been discovered, female loveliness best answers the purpose. Hence that charming social phenomenon: the Young Woman at the Church Fair.

This young person, you must understand, is a virtuous and refined girl, brought up in the very shadow of the sanctuary. She is one of those who hold up their hands in holy horror at the Stage, and the women who "expose themselves" thereon.

And yet, strange to say, though our acquaintance with histrionism in general is not remarkably limited, we know of no well-conducted theatre where it is one of the duties of the actress to descend into the auditorium, and there coquette with promiscuous masculinity for the purpose of selling a ten cent gimcrack for half-a-dollar.

The beautiful moral basis of the whole arrangement deserves notice. You pay an admission fee to enter the hall—which is generally begged, rent-free, of the proprietors, on the ground that they ought to aid "the Cause". Once in, you are expected to buy a slipper-pattern, or some other atrocity that you don't want, in order to help "the Cause"; expected

to take chances in grab-bags, whence you draw, if you are a man, a china doll; if a woman, a shaving-paper case; expected to pay seventy-five cents for an oyster-stew built out of dish-water and one oyster; and after that, expected to go home and meditate on the tender influences of religion upon humanity—and to refrain from giving "the Cause" a good old Pike country benediction.

## PECULIAR METRES.

THERE is no reason why the Muse of Poetry should not enjoy the privileges accorded to the other muses. Their irregularities are well known, and we do not see why she should not be allowed an equal latitude. She does not, either, and she has risen, in this the nineteenth century of nominal liberality, to proclaim her independence. She has too long been compelled to walk in time to the jingle of the ancient quatrain, or the hand-organ swell of the heroic couplet. She demands metrical variety. Some years ago she went on a wild spree with the late Mr. Sidney Dobell, and since then she has coquetted with Mr. D. G. Rossetti and cavorted wildly with Mr. Algernon Charles Swinburne. Lately, Mr. Austin Dobson, Mr. E. A. Gosse, Mr. Robert Bridges and Mr. Theodore Marzials have led the old girl through a wild can-can of Romance metres; and now, following this excellent example, the poets of Puck are taking Erato out on a regular high-old Provencal tare.

The Romance poetry was invented by the Troubadours and the Troudères, who went about singing it under ladies' windows. The ladies were pleased and threw roses down to them. Sometimes the old man woke up, and then the rose business was varied.

The centre-piece of Romance prosody is the refrain, or burden. A line or phrase repeated at certain intervals is called a refrain. "Punch, Brothers, Punch," in the celebrated lyric of the same name, is a burden.

Let us give a brief description of some of these metrical forms, which are now exercising the ingenuity of the poets of 'aughty Halbion and of our own beloved land.

The principal of these are the Ballade, Chant Royal, Sestine, Rondeau, Rondel, Villanelle and Triolet. Of the Ballade, we have recently republished an excellent specimen of Mr. Austin Dobson. The man who goes to work at Ballade writing may choose the eight-syllable form, and construct three stanzas of eight lines each, on three rhymes, or he may fling himself on the ten-syllable form, and sport three stanzas of ten lines each, on four rhymes. In either case, he has got to bring up, at the end of each stanza, with his refrain, and he must finish with an *Envoy*, a kind of poetical summing-up, of half the length of a stanza. Said *Envoy* must begin with the title of some person or persons to whom it is addressed—as "Princes," "Countess," "Schneider," or something of that kind.

The Sestine and the Chant Royal, we will not describe, for fear of dampening the enthusiasm of budding poets. The Rondeau has thirteen iambic lines of eight or ten syllables, whereof the arrangement may be seen at a glance. The Rondeau has only a small refrain of four syllables, which begins stanza No. 1, and is brought in again at the end of No. 2 and No. 3, without rhyming to anything—this not from motives of economy, however. The Rondel goes the Rondeau one better in the number of its lines, but is allowed only eight syllables to a line, and but two rhymes in all. It boasts a spready refrain of two lines, which its puts ostentatiously to the front. The are two forms of the Rondel—the original, and the Dobson variation; the orders of rhymes differing thus:

ORIGINAL.	DOBSON.
Refrain { 1 2	Refrain { 1 2
2	1
1	2
1	2
2	1
Refrain { 1 2	Refrain { 1 2
1	1
2	2
2	1
1	2
Refrain { 1 2	Refrain { 1 2

As to the Villanelle, Mr. Edmund W. Gosse has got it down fine. He says it is written "in tercets and on two rhymes, the first and third verse (line) of the first stanza continuing to alternate as the third line of each successive stanza, until they finally form the close as a couplet." None of this can be denied. The man who understands it has the Villanelle right by the hair, and can make them of any style or length. "The Triolet is a Rondel boiled down—a Rondel of the original form, minus the 3d, 4th, 6th, 8th, 11th and 12th lines. That leaves only eight; yet let no one despise the triolet on account of its small size. It is little, but O Jehosaphat!

The poet who shows a full hand of Rondeaux and things on the 11th page is a devoted student of the Romance poetry. He does the Troubadour business in private life. He always dresses in yellow tights, large boots with flap-tops, a short cloak, and a big sombrero hat with a feather in it. He carries his hair in extensive curls, and plays on a zither under young ladies' windows. On such occasions he wears a water-proof.

To any young and ambitious verse-slingers who may be seduced by this article into trying their hands at Romance metres, the columns of PUCK are open. Their little muses will be kindly received, encouraged, instructed, spanked if necessary, and generally set in the right path. We intend that Erato shall have her lick at the Provencal if it takes all the rhyming dictionaries in the market.

WE never appreciated the bashfulness and retiring disposition of the insurance agent until we made the acquaintance of the tramp.

WHY is it that a person after reading the medical advertisements in a newspaper, involuntarily glances at the column of deaths? Isn't it doubting the value of these remedies a little?

## Answers for the Anxious.

G. I. D.—D. I. G.!

HASELTINE.—Of course she wouldn't, if you would.

J. L. FRENCH.—We will answer your inquiry by mail next week.

UNCLE JOE.—We admit that the construction of epigrams, particularly poetical epigrams, is a difficult art, and that some allowances must be made for the constructor. Yet we hardly think that even the most liberal poetical license authorizes such a variation on the ordinary verb-forms as we find in your touching line:

"Tell me, how this you done."

And furthermore—though this is but a detail, trivial, perhaps; nay, even frivolous—it is just as well for an epigram to have a point. The next epigram you write, Uncle Joe, we advise you to give in fee simple to your little nephew. He can put a tail to it, and make it a dog.

DIAPHRAGMA.—Your original poem—we allude to the "little trifle which you threw off in a moment of idleness"—has always been a great favorite of ours. Poor Tom Hood was generally good at such things.



## OFFICIAL GRIEF.

**A**LDERMAN SHANNON, of Brooklyn, whose presence in the Board of Aldermen in that city was the occasion of a tiresome and protracted "dead-lock," died the other day. While living, Mr. Shannon was not well-spoken of by his colleagues. The reason was that he set his face against the Board being organized; and as every man in it expected to be President of the body, the impossibility of electing anyone was a sore grievance to all. As a natural result, the members of the Board were prodigal in their denunciations of Shannon, and never lost an opportunity of expressing their detestation of him. It is rather to the credit of Shannon—and his descendants will hold it doubtless in grateful remembrance—that the Brooklyn Common Council spoke ill of him. He could ask no better eulogy than is contained in the words: "He never did anything to win a good word from a Brooklyn politician." Shannon died, and there was great grief among his former colleagues. They plunged into the depths of despair, and wore mourning in testimony of their regret.

You never know how deep is the grief of Brooklyn aldermen till the taxpayers have to pay the bill for it. It was so in this case. For when the day came to audit the claims, all signs of mourning were put aside, and a bill for \$398.50 was handed in to the city. The casual reader will observe that there is a fractional nicety about the amount. It falls just \$1.50 short of \$400. Of course a Brooklyn alderman would not be dishonest for a dollar and a-half. Besides, \$398.50 looks better than \$400. It may be hinted that the sum (\$398.50) is not much for the wailing grief of twenty-four able-bodied men. True. But it must be considered that they were Brooklyn aldermen, and that the quality of grief contributed was a peculiar article.

A statistical friend, apparently unawed by the terrible examples before him, has gone to work and collected the separate items of the bill. They certainly present a queer showing.

In the first place there is an item of \$23.50—(the reader will remark the peculiarity of the number)—for postage-stamps, stationery and telegraphing. No statement has been vouchsafed why postage-stamps should be needed for the dead. They are not an ordinary accessory of funerals, and would manifestly be of no use to a corpse. They would represent 1175 letters, to write which would take the aldermen several days, assuming that they all worked in unison—a circumstance which has never yet occurred in the municipal history of Brooklyn. Why stationery was needed for the obsequies is not stated. Its sole purpose, probably, is to enable the aldermen to send in a bill for it to the taxpayers. The charge for telegraphing is, to say the least, mysterious. What was it for? Certainly not to summon the aldermen themselves, for the 1175 letters must have insured their presence. And here occurs the harrowing thought that, notwithstanding the heartfelt nature of their grief, it required forty-eight letters to each alderman before his presence at the obsequies could be secured. In this calculation, however, it is presumed that each alderman wrote at least one letter to himself, to insure his own attendance. Perhaps, however, the telegrams charged were for the deceased, and it becomes a matter of some curiosity to know where they were addressed. The good character of Shannon inclines one to the belief that his posthumous *locale* would be different from that which awaits his lately grieving colleagues.

The next item is for carriages. The charge for these is \$164; the number engaged being thirty-eight. This allows one carriage and seven-twelfths to each alderman. That a Brook-

lyn alderman should fill an entire carriage is perhaps not strange, but the question arises, what did he do with his surplus fraction? Seven-twelfths of a carriage is not to be sneered at—especially when we consider that the use of each one was charged \$4.31 11-19 an hour, and that the seven-twelfths might be the body of the vehicle—its most eligible part. This brings the inquiry near a head. Each alderman had two carriages—one with wheels and box, the other divested of these accessories. The latter answers the description of a "caboose." We are to infer, therefore, that the twenty-four carriages were sent to the funeral, while the alderman stayed at home, each in his "caboose." There could be no objection to this, except that \$4.31 11-19 per hour for a caboose not in active service is excessive. But the "crookedness" of this item pales before the one which succeeds it. It is \$21.75 (note the peculiarity of the number) for crape. This allows each alderman 90 $\frac{5}{8}$  cents for mourning. There can be no genuine aldermanic grief on such a pittance as this, and it goes far to explain why the aldermen remained disconsolately in their "caboosees." Still it would have been sufficient to procure a suitable outfit for the President of the Board, who might have gone to the funeral alone. The members are to be censured for their neglect in not sending him; though we admit they may have been disconcerted in having an office-holder die. The proceeding is almost without precedent.

The next item astounds us by being an even amount. It is \$10 for draping the deceased alderman's chair in the Board. Could anything be more illogical than this? The penurious taxpayers allot \$10 to drape in sable robes the chair of an alderman, and only 90 $\frac{5}{8}$  cents to drape each of his surviving comrades! It is a ghastly satire. In draping the chair, however, an erratic course seems to have been pursued. To fully testify their grief, they draped every chair the deceased had ever occupied while a member. This may have been a hint to the other Brooklyn aldermen that dying was easy for them; and if intended in that way, the taxpayers cannot grudge the \$10. A very clever writer has stated that Shannon was "only five feet in height and of slim build;" but this is scarcely pertinent, as the Finance Committee draped the chairs of all the large men in the board equally with Shannon's.

The next item is for a floral tribute—\$85. It is so unusual to find an even amount in their bill, that the aldermen thought a word of explanation necessary. By it they exonerate themselves completely from any such apparent weakness, for they specify its particulars:

To floral tribute, \$ 4.93.  
To carrying it to grave, 80.07.

We can scarcely reconcile the \$80.07 with our ideas of transportation in Brooklyn, and can explain it on but one hypothesis. The man charged with the mission went to the cemetery by way of Canada. Before the bill is paid, the taxpayers ought to know whether he has arrived at the grave yet, also whether he took any friends with him on the excursion, and whether the city is to pay for them. The \$80 will probably pass unnoticed, but the seven cents is annoying. We feel, however, that it was well spent; for we notice that the messenger made no charge for postage-stamps or stationery on his trip, and hence establishes his claim to honesty and straightforwardness. The amount is odd, which may result from a reduction of seven cents in favor of the city, or an addition on that account of ninety-three cents. No self-respecting florist would sell a tribute for the amount stated—\$4.93. A \$4.93 tribute is not much to show for an expenditure of \$398.50.

The last item, however, caps the climax. It is \$194.25 for 111 PAIRS OF KID GLOVES!

This gives—assuming that he has the ordinary quota of hands—each alderman 9 $\frac{1}{4}$  gloves. It looks to us very much like an attempt to "put up a hand" on the city. What did the aldermen want of nine gloves and a fraction while sitting in their cabooses? It is not to be inferred that, in testimony of his grief, any alderman put on more than one pair of gloves. But from the above calculation, each man must have had five gloves on one hand, and four and a quarter gloves on the other. It is not pleasant to jest on a ghastly subject, but we cannot refrain from remarking that the evident purpose of the aldermen seems to have been to handle the affair with gloves. Had they acted "without gloves," there would have been no \$194.25 charge. (The reader will note the peculiarity of the number.) This kid-glove charge is clearly excessive, and should be contested.

Poor Shannon is dead, and the Common Council spend \$398.50 in honoring his memory. To the eye of the taxpayer, the memory of Shannon consists of 1175 postage-stamps, a four-dollar floral tribute, 24 cabooses, \$31.75 for crape, and 222 black-kid gloves.

The bill was quickly assented to last week, and furnishes the first example in the history of Brooklyn of the Common Council agreeing on any one point.

## Puckerings.

Now plant lager.

THE spring-time cat is audible, with boot-jack obligato.

JUST at present the "theatrical backer" is backing out.

WM. B. ASTOR may now get Baron Rothschild to go halves with him on a strawberry.

THE Akhoond of Swat is called in. The Maharajah of Jheend looms up on the horizon.

IT may not have struck you yet, but it is about time that the dreamless sleep of oblivion enfolded the man with the double-breasted ulster.

WHAT is it bumps down the office stair,  
Tripped up on the landing unaware,  
By the editor, bounding from his lair?  
'Tis the poet of Spring with the wavy hair.

"April showers bring May flowers." This pleasing sentiment is designed to appeal to the horticultural tastes of the man with the patent-leather shoes while he is waiting in a doorway four miles from his umbrella.

SHE never told her love, but she roped him in for about half a ton of ice-cream, all the same, and as much candy as two sugar-refineries could turn out in the course of a year, and now he says that if any worm i' the bud is going to prey on her damask cheek, it would be advisable to let the contract out to a sea-serpent, and then bet on the cheek.

ILLNESS, indisposition and maladies trouble not the player who has a good part. But woe betide the manager who reposes his trust in an actress playing a bad one, for the doctor's certificate is flaunted often in his face and he learns to his cost the insecurity of his trust. And thereby hangs a call in the green-room.



## A PRIVATE LETTER.

MISS LUCILLE is a charming young actress, surrounded, as all charming young actresses are, by a limitless host of admirers. It is certainly more than can be expected of so popular a creature that equal reciprocation should be given to all her devotees; and so, lest she should offend one or the other by over-graciousness in any direction, she scrupulously scorns them all, and crushes them alike with her indifference. The numerous epistles she receives daily, all glowing with fervent adoration, disappear into her histrionic waste-basket as fast as they arrive.

But Miss Lucille, having so far shown a preference for a gentleman well known in metropolitan circles, as to make a wager with him involving a pair of six-buttoned gloves—which, it is needless to say, she won—the happy loser forwarded his forfeit with a letter. He fully believed that *that* one letter, at least, would be answered. But no—whether from having become accustomed to ignore her correspondents, or from that peculiar indescribable attribute of fascinating femininity, which might be called lethargy, were it not that lethargy is too unromantic a term—there came no response. In despair the loser of the gloves penned the following letter. Through private and personal influence we have obtained a copy of it. It is written in a spirit which we commend to all who may hold similar relations with unreachable divinities:

NEW YORK, April, 1878.

My dear Faker:

Excuse me for bothering you, but herewith enclosed please find two half-sheets of note-paper, on which I have written "Yes" and "No" respectively. Also a stamped and addressed envelope, intended for either of the half-sheets as aforesaid. My idea is, that if you have received the gloves I sent you a week ago you will kindly insert the "yes" document in the envelope, and mail; if not, the other. I have bent my mighty intellect to devise means whereby you could pay me this attention with the least inconvenience to yourself, and have finally concluded to advise the following:

Toss yourself languidly on your divan, having gracefully pulled the bell-rope in your descent. On the arrival of the servant in answer to the summons, deliver the following mandates—

1. "Read that letter" (indicating this epistle by a wink of the left eye).
2. "Do you understand it?" (Servant answers "yes.")
3. "Find the 'Yes' (or 'No') half-sheet."
4. "Place in envelope addressed and stamped."
5. "Put out your tongue."
6. "Rub the gummy side of the flap over that moistened member."
7. "Seal and mail."
8. "Get out."
9. "Oh, waiter! Take my crimping-tongs to the kitchen and heat 'em red-hot. Get me all the morning papers. Bring me a bucket of iced sherbet. If anybody calls, tell them to call again when I am rested after this."

I think, my dear, by adhering strictly to these instructions, you will be able to get through the task without serious exhaustion. But be careful and not overload your lungs with air during the conversation. Nothing hurts frail creatures' lungs so much as much air.

And sometimes when you should casually hear that others of the company are writing to me, just timidly and whisperingly insinuate that you are alive to your ever-devoted and wronged

DAN FLATFOOT.

It is needless to add that an answer came back. But we may be permitted to add that "you just ought to have seen that answer."

## "A WORD TO THE WISE."

"DO you speak French?" Of course, everybody does, or did once, with—to a native Frenchman—astonishing fluency, speak French.

Alas! for the treachery of memory which, on the eve of their departure for the Paris *Exposition*, puts so many of our friends to their wits' ends to recall half a dozen words of a language which "there was a time" they spoke as well as their own, some possibly even vieing with the Parisian, just as the gentleman from Dublin, without ever having crossed the British channel, became quite as proficient on his friend professor Blauenau's German flute as he was on the English reed.

To the possible half-dozen of our readers who honestly respond "*nong, nong*" to the query "*parlez-vous francais?*" we have a few words to say, lest they should, supposing they contemplate a visit to the *Exposition*, after wrestling with a French grammar and vocabulary for a few days, dare to storm, lingually, the gay capital.

We remember well how we went through a week's "coaching," and how, flushed with the thought of victory, we scorned our mother tongue, and flung our French at an unhappy "*Mossoo*" for full forty minutes, at intervals, while waiting for the boat at Dover. Our humiliation may be better imagined than described, when, on board of the boat, we overheard the following conversation, in excellent English, between the gentleman whom he had tortured, and the steward:

FRENCHMAN. Who is that person? (nodding in our direction.)

STEWARD. He took passage as Mr. Jones.

FRENCHMAN. Do you know what country he belongs to?

STEWARD. England, I suppose; Jones is a Welsh name, however.

FRENCHMAN. Ah! yes. A thousand thanks. I understand. The poor fellow make mistake at the waiting room. He think me one of his good compatriots of that beautiful country, Wales. But, *mon dieu*, what a language it has; I could not understand one syllable.

This incident reminds us of an occasion on which we happily came off with flying colors. It devolved upon us to make a speech to a mixed company of English and French officers at the close of the Crimean war. The Frenchmen predominating, we paid them the compliment of attempting our oration in French. The applause which followed the speech was vociferous. We were less astonished and gratified at such a denouement when we subsequently discovered that none of our English friends understood French, and that the French officers were not aware that they were being addressed in their native tongue.

Painfully conscious of our own deficiencies, it was with grim satisfaction that, on our last visit to Paris, we noted the shortcomings of others, notably of our worthy friends—well, let us allude to them here simply as A and B. We first saw them at Calais, and oh! how meekly, while suffering from the chop of the channel, did they seem to ignore for a time their claim to culture in a foreign tongue. Gradually, however, as the qualms vanished, language again fired their eye, and even when alone they struggled to confuse each other. The occasional "*gener comprong par*" of A, in dignified tones, in answer to B's gasconic contortions, was infinitely refreshing. An English word or so would occasionally crop in, or conversation would have become an impossibility. For instance: "*J'ai atay a Parry before et je comprong le ropes, par exampel.*"

The proverbial politeness of the people whom A and B were about to confuse—for not the vestige of a smile can be detected on the face

a Frenchman, even though he be addressed in a style that would convulse a Nestor—increased the rash ardor of our friends. Thoroughly satisfied that they were making decided hits, they would wade out into a sea of sentences polyglot that finally swamped the unfortunate natives, who, in sheer despair fell back on their chronic shrug and extended palms.

It was at a restaurant on the *boulevard des Italiens* that A and B most laid themselves out to "astonish the Browns," and each "eager for the fray" thus commenced his onslaught on "la langue Française."

A. "Gorsong."

The call was answered by an attentive waiter, who would have appeared, even if his local appellation had not reached his tympanum in a clouded strain.

A. "Er—gorsong, mongjay—comprenez?"

G. "Oui, monsieur."

B. "Tray bang; portey moa de dinner, gorsong, et—et—tut, tut—quickly vous savez."

G. "Plait—il, monsieur?"

B. "Nong, nong! par d'eels." (Sotto voce to A.) "He speaks English. Plate of eels, indeed—not if I know it."

A. (To the rescue) "Par d'eels, gorsong. Mais vous poovey parler dong vot proper long; je comprong le long Frongsay."

Had he been addressed in Chinese the waiter would have been as wise. He waited patiently.

B. (To the front) "Poortey moa de dinner."

Light dawned on the garçon's mind.

A. "Et moa ose." "Et moi aussi."

G. "Oui messieurs, tout de suite."

B. "Nong, nong, par de sweet—viangd roti pour commongsay."

G. "Bien, monsieur."

A. (Patting his vest) "J'ai une grosse femme qui veang."

B. "Et moa aussi, gorsong, une grosse femme."

More light dawned on the garçon's understanding, and with a rapidity peculiar to his class he prepared a table for four guests.

A. "That fool of a gorsong has provided plates for four. That won't do, you know. Hi, gorsong, nous souhaitay a mongjay par soi-meme."

But the "goorsong" did not hear, and would not have understood if he had heard, so it was all the same.

He glanced anxiously at the door, whispered to the *dame de comptoir*, shrugged his shoulders, and speeding to the kitchen, soon returned with four soups, politely inquiring whether the ladies of messieurs were expected immediately. But, as the only intelligible word was "*dames*," it occurred to our friends that it was a private expletive, and they did not reply.

The soup being consumed, the anxious waiter asked if he should countermand the extra dishes.

Hazarding the monosyllable "*nong*," for it was a toss up with the diners whether the waiter was requesting them to partake of green peas or spinach, the courses were produced and gone through with.

At length the bill was called for, and brought. It was for four dinners, and they had to pay it, too—pay the penalty of ignorance, for instead of saying as they each meant to:

"Apportez-moi du diner, j'ai grand faim," they had exclaimed:

"Poortey moa de (pronounced *deux*) dinner, j'ai une grosse femme."

They drowned their regrets in a bumper of Burgundy, but we are pained to add, that, not benefiting by sad experience, they subsequently boldly demanded a staircase instead of a corkscrew.

These worthies, like the English lady who would be Parisian, and hailed the driver of a *voiture* as a pig, were too far gone to be easily reclaimed.

A. LITCHFIELD.



## MY LOVE-LETTER.



1. I deposited it in the lamp-postbox on the corner, and watched the postman take it out.



2. I saw him, attracted by the marvelous beauty of the handwriting, take a sly peep at the interior.



3. I saw him begin to smile. I knew then he was reading the 3d line, beginning "Darling, I forever—"



4. The smile broadened. He had reached the 6th line.



5. It was evident that he had struck the 10th line.



6. It must have been the 14th line that so amused him.



7. That was certainly the 20th line.



8. Line 23 appeared to affect him strangely.



9. Line 29 got him where the hair was short.



10. At the 34th line he positively laughed,



11. But at the 37th line he might have been said to guffaw.



12. The postman became a raving idiot at the 39th line, and was removed to Bloomingdale. Since then I have carried my epistles myself.

P. S.—It strikes me that the postman must have considered my love-letter funny.



## DIPLOMACY.

A NEW PLAY, IN FOUR ACTS, OF UNLIMITED INTEREST AND MIRACULOUS CONSTRUCTION, WRITTEN BY MESSRS CENTRAL AND PROSPECT PARKE. PRODUCED AT WALLACK'S THEATRE, APRIL 1ST, 1878.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS:

JOHN LESTER BEAUCLERC.  
CAPTAIN JULIAN MONTAGUE.  
ORLOFF ROBINSON.  
BARON SHANNON SHTEIN.  
ALGIE FLOYD FAIRFAX.  
COUNTESS ZICKA COGHLAN.  
DORA GRANGER.  
MARQUISE PONISI DE RIO ZARES.

And others not absolutely necessary to the miraculousness of the construction.

## ACT I.

(Hotel at Monte Carlo.)

"Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,  
'Tis woman's whole existence."

MARQUISE PONISI. I am an aristocratic old lady, designed by the unsuspecting adapters to give tone to the first act, and to ring in the Diplomacy element on the public. If at times my motives should appear misty, as it were, ascribe such mistiness to the authors; for I certainly am not quite clear as to what I am here for, or, being here, what I am to do with myself. Ah, here comes John Lester; perhaps he can explain.

[Enter JOHN LESTER.]

JOHN LESTER. Ah, Marquise. You are here, are you?

MARQUISE. Not more so than you. Which suggests to me the fact that I have as much right to be here as you.

JOHN LESTER. Precisely. We are both calculated to make the Diplomacy part of this entertainment palpable to the audience.

MARQUISE. But, *entre nous*, Mr. Beauclerc—don't you think we shall have somewhat of a job of it?

JOHN LESTER. Shouldn't wonder. This diplomatic business is hard to make intelligible to these benighted Americans.

[Enter JULIAN MONTAGUE.]

JULIAN. Yes, they lack culchah.

JOHN LESTER. Ah, Montie, glad you came. Here is your appointment as Military Attaché of the British Embassy at Vienna. (*Aside*) So glad I had a chance to say something that bears upon the play.

JULIAN. Thanks, old man. (*To Marquise*) Can I see your lovely daughter?

MARQUISE. Not just yet, Mr. Beauclerc. My lovely daughter is at present in her dressing-room. If you return a little later, you can see her. [*Exit MARQUISE.*]

JOHN LESTER (*to Montague*)—So it's the lovely daughter, is it?

JULIAN. It is—very much.

JOHN LESTER. As your older brother, I would merely recall to you the existence of a certain young woman who nursed you when you were Zicka than you are now—you catch the pun—and to apply the old adage: "Hell hath no fury like a scorned female," or words to that effect.

JULIAN. Too true, my dear brother—but as your younger brother, permit me to respond that if you suppose I shall weaken in my determination to make up to Dora Granger on that account, and spoil four good acts of this play,

you were never more mistaken in the whole course of your life.

(JOHN LESTER *subsides*—and so continues until further notice.)

[Enter DORA GRANGER.]

(She is robed in vestal purity.)

[Enter ORLOFF ROBINSON]

(Bids farewell to Dora before leaving for Russia, and leaves his photograph.)

[Enter ZICKA.]

(Surreptitiously obtains possession of photograph and exit.)

JULIAN (*to Dora*). Sweetest incarnation of all that is immaculate, virtuous and transcendently chaste, I adore you!

DORA. This from you! Ignoble, heartless wretch. If any other man had said that, it wouldn't have been any more than I expected. But Montie—this from you—you—with a capital Y—oh—oh—(*sobs*).

JULIAN (*aside*). Well, I have made love to a limitless supply of young women in my life—but I never came across one who was affected like this before. Oh this, this won't do at all. (*Aloud*) Dora, look here, is the fact of my love so galling, or are you often taken that way? Is the prospect of becoming my wife—

DORA (*hysterically*). Your wi-hife! (*throws herself into his arms. A few minutes for refreshments.*)

DORA. Julian, I know my conduct must seem erratic to you, but you must know that I am good, innocent and pure; to use a colloquial phrase—as pure as they make'm; I thought when you told me you loved me—that—that—but it isn't necessary to finish the sentence. Your own natural depravity and that of the audience will immediately grasp the situation. But to be your wife—your wife in Italics—O virtuous and blissful thought! (*In each others arms.*)

[Enter EVERYBODY.]

EVERYBODY. What does this mean!

JULIAN. It means that virtue is its own reward! and I shall marry Dora—*Deo* and the Marquise *volente!* (*MARQUISE volents immediately.*)

[Enter ZICKA.]

ZICKA. His wife!! My hour will come!

[CURTAIN FALLS.]

## ACT II.

[HENRY BEAUCLERC'S apartments at Paris.]

"Mark now, how plain a tale shall put you down."

The scene is laid at Beauclerc's apartments in Paris, but this doesn't prevent the Baron Stein from being on the stage, in discussion with the Countess Zicka.

BARON STEIN. Countess, if you would make yourself useful to me and de Russian goferment, shoost shtel de dracing of the fordifications around Gnshtontinople out of dot disbatch-box of Shulian Montague's dere. He leafs for Fienna do-night. I know you don't like him pooty well, 'cause he married de oder gairl. So shtel dot baber and dot vill make him feel pooty bad all over.

ZICKA. I will do it, for I hate him. Jerusalem, how I hate him!!! (*She hates him all over the stage.*)

BARON. I dun't know eckzeckly how you gone to got de key wot unlocks dot disbatch-box, but dot's none of my funeral. [*Exit.*]

ZICKA. There is the dispatch-box! In it is the tracing. To secure that tracing I must open the case. To open the case I must have a key. To have the key I must get it! That's logic for you. This would be a difficult task, if Sardou hadn't fixed things convenient for me.

[Enter DORA.]

Dora, do you know the Baron Stein feels very bad at not being invited to your wedding.

The least you can do, for the sake of old times, is to write him a letter and say you are sorry that you couldn't invite him, because your husband objected, but that you respect his bald head and his resemblance to Bismarck none the less on that account!

DORA. How thoughtful of you, Zicka. I will do so at once. (*Writes*) You perceive I leave the letter open. And I leave it on the table for future use. I don't send it immediately. Why should I? It would spoil subsequent proceedings if I did.

ZICKA. How thoughtful of you! [*Exit DORA.*]  
Now for the rest of this little business.

[Enter MARQUISE.]

Marquise, where are your jewels?

MARQUISE. Packed, of course.

ZICKA. What! packed in a trunk? Why gracious goodness, Marquise. You wouldn't think of going off without having your jewels in a hand-satchel. Here is your hand-satchel. Go in and get your jewels; I will pack them for you. Meanwhile, hand me your keys.

MARQUISE. Why, of course. It's the most natural thing in the world. This bunch contains my son-in-law's keys as well as Dora's, but what's the use of being a mother-in-law if you can't sling keys around. [*Exit.*]

ZICKA. Ah, I have the keys! Which one is it? This one! I will open the dispatch-box. I will purloin the tracing. I will play circus generally and promiscuously with the contents of that case; and who shall say I did it?

[Proceeds to unlock the case to slow music.]

She fortunately gets through in time to meet the Marquise on her return with the jewels. Packs them away. Then surreptitiously encloses tracing in Dora's letter to the Baron Stein—which, quite naturally, was left open for the purpose—and then exits with vehemence and dexterity.

[Enter JOHN LESTER and JULIAN MONTAGUE.]

JULIAN. To be married! and to leave for Vienna! with an appointment as Military Attaché! on the same day, and with a lovely red dispatch-box with all my papers and things packed away so nicely! Oh, this is happiness indeed! [*Beams.*]

JOHN LESTER. Don't let your feelings run away with you, Montie. I shall loaf around here as a sort of balance-wheel. I may not have much to say or do, but you must admit that at standing round, as a conspicuous background, I can take the shine out of any man in the business. And you will find that I shall come in handy to tone things down before I get through.

[Enter ORLOFF.]

ORLOFF. I heard of your marriage, Julian, and I came to congratulate you.

JULIAN. Thanks.

ORLOFF. I don't know whom you married, but I trust you didn't fall into the hands of that Dora girl.

JULIAN. And why not, pray?

ORLOFF. She is a bad crowd. I was stopped on my way to Russia. She is a spy. The photograph I gave her was used to identify me. It is not pleasant to be nabbed just as one is about to cross the line. Just try it!

[Enter DORA, still radiant with the grace of crystal purity.]

ORLOFF (*recognizing her*). Mon Dieu! Dora his wife! (*Aside*) It strikes me that I have put my foot in it to a most picturesque and delightful extent.

(Dora is led off by her husband.)

JULIAN. Orloff! Explain!

ORLOFF. I'd rather not.

JULIAN. I insist. Dora, the girl whom you have thus accused happens to be my wife. A mere trifle, perhaps, but still sufficient to make me want to know a little more about her.

ORLOFF. I'd rather not!

JULIAN (*with emphasis*). I'd rather you



would. Now don't force me to do the emotional business, but speak out at once.

ORLOFF. I'd rather not.

JULIAN. Orloff—darn it—if you don't speak out I'll orloff and—*(menacing gesture.)*

JOHN LESTER, who has all this time been lingering in the background in various graceful and becoming attitudes, intercedes and interrupts hostilities. This little piece of business is kept up at intervals of three minutes till the end of the act. It is useful as teaching the virtue of restraint, and as giving Lester an excuse for being on the stage.

ORLOFF explains more fully his reasons for believing that Dora is a spy, and not of that strict moral rectitude which ought to characterize the wife of Julian Montague.

ORLOFF. I told you I'd rather not, but you didn't care whether I rathered not or not, and so I spoke, though even now I'd rather I hadn't. *[Exit.]*

JULIAN. Oh, my Dora! my wife!

Julian goes to his dispatch-box. Perceives the ravages of the late circus. Discovers that his tracing is missing, and gasps:

JULIAN. Oh—oh! What sort of a crowd have I got into, anyway—! Oh, John Lester, all is over.

JOHN LESTER. Never say all is over. That's cheap and stagey. All is never over. Just hold on until we've investigated this matter thoroughly. In the meanwhile, be a man!

*[Julian braces up and tries to be a man.]*  
*[The voice of Dora from within calls "Julian!"]*

JULIAN. Oh—oh—oh—

Of all hard things of mortal plan,  
The hardest thing is to be a man!

Julian collapses. John Lester sustains and soothes him. Overflow of masculine grief.

*[CURTAIN.]*

### ACT III.

*(Henry Beauclerc's Apartments.)*

"But hither shall I never come again."

[NOTE.—The intelligent reader—and to no other is this condensed drama directed—will allow his imagination to supply whatever links there may be necessary to connect one act with the other. We regret that limited space prevents our chronicling every episode, but the knowledge that, even though we did, the intelligent reader aforesaid might still be left in the dark about a great many things, palliates our shortcomings.]

*[Discover JULIAN and JOHN LESTER.]*

JULIAN. I can't find Baron Shtein. If we could only land on him before he leaves Paris, and see the letter he received from Dora, it would settle everything.

*[Enter BARON SHTEIN.]*

BARON. I was told you was looking for me.

JULIAN. I'm glad you've come. To the point at once. You have hitherto been having private political correspondence with Madame la Marquise. That's the Diplomacy racket which I shan't undertake to elucidate. However, there's a check for a million dollars, or ducats, or francs, or shekels, as you choose to call them. Take it; it's yours. I don't quite know why I give it to you, or what entitles you to it. It would take too long to explain it to the audience. But now that you have this money, I wish all your correspondence with Dora's mother to cease. When I say cease, I mean I want it to have having had ceased already.

BARON *(pocketing the check)*. It shall cease at once.

JULIAN. You have now in your possession a letter from her. Give it to me.

BARON *(looking over his unopened letters)*. Vy, by Jimminy, so I have. I don't have knowed it myzself.

JULIAN. Give it to me.

BARON. What, give my letter to you?

JULIAN. Yes. You have my check. Didn't I tell you I wanted all correspondence to having had ceased? *(Baron hesitates, is completely bulldozed by Monty, and then yields.)*

BARON. Dere. Now you got de letter.

Aber liden once vere I got de dead woot on you. You don't can oben de letter. It was addressed to me. To oben anoder man's letter is a shtades-prison offense; aber to brove do you dot dere's nudding shnide about me, I will open him for you. *(Opens the letter, and generously hands it over to Monty)* And now, my dear friend, good-bye. Shake hands. *(Monty refuses.)* Ah, I'm sorry. *(Turning to John Lester)* But you will please be so kind as to shake me de hand? No? Well, dot's puty mean. I'm sure, John Lester, you've got little enough to do in dis act, you could afford to shook hands wid a feller. Vel, dam it, I shake my own hand. *[Exit.]*

JULIAN. O John Lester, this letter is in Dora's hand. I am lost. What can she have written? *(Coquettes with letter.)*

JOHN LESTER. Don't stand there toying with the gum-flap. Read the darned thing.

JULIAN. My dear Lester, you are certainly the most practical man I ever met. *(Looks at letter.)* Oh, there can be no mistake. It's Dora's hand. Those bow-legged D's! They are hers. *(Sobs over the bow-legged D's. The tracing drops out.)* Great heavens! the missing tracing! *(Sobs over missing tracings.)* There can be no doubt of her iniquity! *(Sobs over no doubt. John Lester picks up tracing and sniffs it.)*

JULIAN *(reading letter)*. "Dear Baron: Didn't invite you cause husband kicked. Don't be offended. Send this instead. Dora" *(sobs)*.

JOHN LESTER. Instead of sobbing like Old Probabilities in the upper lake regions, suppose you pull up and say what you're going to do about it.

JULIAN. We must—boo-hoo—get rid—boo-hoo—of the old woman first!

JOHN LESTER *(with fiendish gusto)*. Egad we must! *(Applause of audience, lasting three minutes.)*

JULIAN *(in tears)*. Is Dora guilty, or isn't she? She must be. And yet she can't! O Heaven! can such things be, and overcome us like a dose of laudanum, without our special wonder? *(boo-hoo.)*

JOHN LESTER. Don't believe her guilty until you have found out that she is not innocent.

JULIAN. John Lester, what would I do with out you? You have been the fond brother of my childhood, and the balance-wheel through my entire second act. But you cannot know what it is to suffer as I am suffering now. *(Sobs violently, and lifts the bass-fiddle off its hinges.)* John Lester, I will see her and speak to her.

JOHN LESTER. You had better let me speak to her for you.

*(Audience immediately votes confidence in John Lester, but in vain; he goes and leaves Julian.)*

*[Enter DORA.]*

DORA *(to Julian)*. Monty, you look distressed. Dry your tears, and tell me what ails you.

JULIAN *(aside)*. How can I tell her? Look at those eyes, those ears, those teeth—she couldn't have done such a thing. *(Aloud, hysterically)* Dora, my darling Dora, you didn't do it, did you?

DORA. Didn't do what, Julian? They all do it. Explain yourself, love.

JULIAN. Yes—all the world may; but you could never do such a thing.

DORA. How do you know? Do what?

JULIAN *(aside, in agony)*. Ah, she doesn't dare deny it! Oh misery, oh despair! Oh infinite cataclysm of woe! Have I married such a woman?

DORA *(trying to keep calm)*. Julian, in just about two minutes more I'll get angry, if you don't stop sobbing and tell me what you're talking about.

*(Julian sobs out the bitter truth about the stolen tracing and all that.)*

DORA *(in towering eloquence of scorn)*. And you dare to suspect me!

JULIAN. I don't know what I dare. Say that you are innocent.

DORA. I refuse to say anything so self-evident. Monster, farewell!

JULIAN. Oh, Dora—I don't know what to do; I only know that I love you, utterly beyond the hitherto existing possibilities of affection! *(Clasps her belt-buckle in frenzy)* I don't ask you to say that you are innocent, but do say that you are not guilty.

DORA *(breaking loose)*. Away—away—out of my sight! To suspect me, me!!! Approach one step nearer and I shall plunge myself with a double-acting, self-revolving back-fall out of the middle of that bay-window! *(flies to bay-window.)*

JULIAN. Ah—then you are guilty! Don't tumble, Dora! Oh, then all is over between us. Come away from that window. The happiness of my life is shattered. Farewell!

DORA. Don't go, Monty! Don't go! Don't go!

JULIAN *(going)*. Ah, it's your turn now to do the emotional, is it? But you shan't get the best of me! You have refused to declare your innocence—I gave you all the time that the play allows! Farewell—for ever! *(sobs himself off.)*

DORA. Gone! *(runs to the door that is closed in her face, and does a side-fall.)*

*[CURTAIN.]*

### ACT IV.

*(Beauclerc's office.)*

"What do you call the play?" "I call it the Mousetrap, you can call it the Smelling Match; If you prefer."—*Many Poets Condensed.*

*[Enter JULIAN and JOHN LESTER.]*

JULIAN *(in excitement)*. I shall away. I shall as away as possible. I leave for Vienna at once and even more so. I'd rather be a Turk and bay the Muscovites than such a rum spouse.

JOHN LESTER. Pause, ponder and reflect. I have had nothing to do for three acts; do you suppose this fourth act isn't worth something? Just seclude yourself in the next room, and leave me the stage, if I don't make things come out all right eventually I am unworthy of the name of Proprietor, Manager and Leading Juvenile. *(Exit Montague in confidence.)*

*[Enter ALGIE FLOYD.]*

JOHN LESTER *(to Algie)*. Ah, Algie, glad to see you. By the way, that reminds me you have appeared on and off during this entire play, and it never occurred to me till now that you've got nothing in the world to do with the piece, except, perhaps, to make an ass of yourself.

ALGIE. Too true; but you must admit I fill the bill gloriously. *(Audience applaud.)*

JOHN LESTER. Well, I won't be hard on you. I'll give you a chance to speak one good line, any way—now mind your cue. Tell me, old man, I've crowded you out of your apartment with my brother's newly-arrived family;—where did you manage to sleep last night?

ALGIE *(who has waited anxiously for his cue)*. Oh, I have friends in Paris. I know where to sleep. *(Knowingly.)*

*(Loud exclamations of delight and appreciation from audience.)*

JOHN LESTER. Very good. Now run along, little boy. You have spoken your line very nicely. Withdraw into the next room, and wait until I give you another show. *(Exit ALGIE contentedly.)*

*[Enter ZICKA.]*

ZICKA. How'd do, Lester? I have taken the liberty to have a parcel sent for me, to this office, in your care. Has it arrived?

*(Concluded on page 10.)*







PUK.



OCEAN SNARL.



## DIPLOMACY.

(Continued from page 7.)

JOHN LESTER. It has not. (*aside*) This parcel racket is gauzy. (*aloud*) You're sure you had it sent here?

ZICKA. Quite so.

JOHN LESTER. Then I will go into the next room and inquire. Please occupy yourself according to stage-directions during my absence, and do not forget that this act fourth act is my act. (*Exit.*)

ZICKA. I will once more rummage among the papers. This time I will operate on John Lester's desk. Mine is a rummaging part—I am the great Anglo-Franco-American Rummager. (*At Lester's desk*) These papers mean that Julian goes to Vienna. Wherever Julian goes there will I go. If he joins the army, I will at once become a vivandiere. If he joins the circus, I will jump through paper-hoops on a bare-back steed. Oh, he is all the world to me!

[*Enter JOHN LESTER.*]

JOHN LESTER. Your parcel has not yet arrived. You can go into the next room yourself and wait, if you like. [*Exit ZICKA.*]

(JOHN LESTER picks up a newspaper and smells it. He smells again. He smells some more. There is an airy grace and ethereal sweetness about his mode of sniffing that warms the inmost soul of the audience—who melt away in an ecstasy of admiration.)

JOHN LESTER (*after repeated eloquent sniffs*) I smell a mice! (*Goes to the desk and smells all around it.*) That same perfume! I will smell some more! This part requires the most experienced olfactory nerves. I am the only man in the United States who could go sniffing through an act like this without making myself ridiculous. I flatter myself that I just escape it. Ah, I have smelt that smell before. Let me think where. By Jove, I remember. Algie!—

[*Enter ALGIE FLOYD.*]

Algie! Smell this.

ALGIE (*in surprise*). Eh?

JOHN LESTER (*impatiently*). Oh pshaw, you can't sniff for a scent! Don't you smell?

ALGIE (*whose cue for his second great line in the play has just been given*). It's a woman! (*Thunders of applause.*) [*Exit ALGIE.*]

(John Lester hastily writes letter to Baron Shtein and sends messenger.)

[*Enter ZICKA.*]

ZICKA. Good by, John Lester. I shan't wait for the parcel. (*gives her hand; he takes it, kisses it, and sniffs it.*)

JOHN LESTER (*aside*). She's been among these papers. It smells like the tracing in the previous act. (*aloud*) Countess, it isn't customary to comment on the odor of femininity; but permit me to observe that you have the most smellifluous fragrance about you that I ever nostrilized.

ZICKA. Oh, yes; a perfume just from Japan. Like it? It's called Puck's Essential Oil of Congress—

JOHN LESTER (*aside*). Essential oil be dammed! (*aloud*) Countess, I have a story to tell you. It's called the Mousetrap, or a Smelling Match in three sniffs.

ZICKA. Go ahead. (*sits*).

JOHN LESTER. Once upon a time there was a mouse. Upon that same oneness of time there was a trap. Trap baited with cheese. Mouse approaches trap. Observe the grace of my gestures. Understand this is my act. Mouse gets paw in; see, this is the mouse getting its paw in (*gesticulates undulatingly*), mouse gets more of itself in (*gesticulates airily, daintily, insinuatingly. Audience ecstatic*) Ah, slap, bang mouse is caught. Twig? Mouse, you. Trap, me! Cheese, ah—cheese, ah—cheese, ah— (*aside*) Demmit what's the cheese? (*aloud*) Ah, this play is the cheese. Do you understand?

ZICKA (*uneasily*). Understand? Eh? If

I were not a lady I should say, I'll be hanged if I do.

JOHN LESTER. If you don't, you'll be arrested and locked up. I don't know about hanged.

[*Enter Messenger with letter.*]

Here's a letter from Baron Shtein, containing the name of the woman who got Dora into her terrible fix. You had better confess or I will open the letter and expose you to Justice and the inclemency of the weather! (*COUNT-ESS squirms in agony*)—Confess! (*Squirms some more.*)

ZICKA. Oh, John Lester, how can you act this way. You, whom I thought so different from other men.

JOHN LESTER. Remember I am a Man! (*draws himself up in the full pride of his masculinity. Audience ecstatic again.*) Besides this is my act. Confess!—

ZICKA. Oh, Julian! Oh, Lester! Oh the curse of playing unsympathetic parts! And a leading lady too! What shall I say, what shall I do?

JOHN LESTER. Confess!

ZICKA. I confess.

JOHN LESTER. To me? That is not enough. (*Enter DORA, JULIAN, MARQUISE and ALGIE.*) To them, also.

ZICKA. This is too much! But if I don't confess, the play will never end. Oh, Julian. You will never know how much I cared for you. I admit I took a queer way to show it! But I loved you with all the labial lastingness of the letter l. I confess I am the nice young woman for a tea-party who stole your tracing, had Orloff arrested, and played general promiscuous extravagant circus through the entire piece. (*Julian immediately makes it up with Dora.*)

ZICKA (*to Monty*). Do not be overcruel in your censure. To be cast for this part is torture enough. Forgive me! (*Monty looks most terribly unforgiving.*)

JULIAN. I will forgive—when I forget.

ZICKA. Is there no one here who will forget right away, and forgive sooner?

DORA. Yes. I will. Anything to end the play. (*Offers to embrace her. Offer declined.*)

JOHN LESTER. Lead her off, Algie. (*ALGIE leads her off.*) Dora look up! Julian brace up! Marquise, let up! Ladies and gentlemen, this is my act. It's a long Zicka that has no turning, and Diplomacy is the mother of invention.

[CURTAIN.]

SILAS DRIFT.



## DRAMATIC NOTES.

HELLER keeps on his way rejoicing, and exercises the wonted mystic influence in drawing crowds to his pretty Twenty-fourth Street Hall.

THE Boston version of "The Exiles" is splendidly mounted at Booth's Theatre.

THE Aquarium Chimpanzee is better, and fears are entertained that he will live.

"DIPLOMACY," at Wallack's, besides being well-set and well-acted, has been well-received and is generally welcome.

"OUR ALDERMEN," at the Park, though well acted, is not a success. The original play "Der Hypochonder" is a stupid thing, and Mr. Run-nion's Americanization is no improvement.

THE National is to have "Captain Kyd" under a new management. There will be recalled the significant fact in this connection that the Cap. found a treasure.

THERE seems to be no end to circus. Two are in full blast, not counting the Bronchos who have gone to Boston to perform in "Lalla Rookh" at the Globe Theatre in that city.

THE Lyceum has been hired by a teacher of elocution, and Joannes rubs his hands together to think that the depth of the theatre's degradation did not occur during his engagement.

A NEW YORK actress has dramatized "Joseph Balsamo," and a New York manager has agreed to "return the manuscript in few days." There is a good ingenue role in "Joseph Balsamo," but neither the New York actress or the New York manager could play it.

WORD comes from Paris that Sardou was reconciled to the omission of his name from the announcements of "The Exiles" at the Broadway Theatre, when he heard that George Fawcett Rowe was the adaptor of the American version.

THE Native American theatre-patron, who admires National Art from a bill-board ticket, must be fully convinced by this time that further encouragement to this branch of dramatic production will end in the depopulization of Thompson St. and South 5th Avenue.

MISS MAGGIE MITCHELL is in the last week of her engagement at the Standard, and the "Pearl of Savoy" prevails in consequence. Joe Emmet—who rivals Shak—p—e in the methods of spelling his name—comes next Monday and will throw some light on Fritz, "Our Cousin German."

GEORGE C. BONIFACE, who has been referred to time out of mind as "the eminent New York favorite" (though with whom he is a favorite has not always been stated) has been playing *Corporal Antoine* at the Olympic, and playing it so finely as to win universal praise. This does not excuse the gentleman who writes Mr. Boniface's advertisements, but it is well for the Olympic, where good acting is a novelty.

JOHN McCULLOUGH, the robust Californian—who, by the way, is a native of the Emerald Isle—begins an engagement at the Grand Opera House next Monday as *Spartacus* in the "Gladiator." The support includes Miss Stella Boniface, Miss Marie Prescott, H. A. Langdon, F. D. Tannehill, Jos. Wheelock and some others. If Mr. McCullough fills his three weeks' time despite the assistance of these, the bet will have been fairly won.

## TOO CONSIDERATE.

IRATE PASSENGER—"Driver, why in thunder don't you whip up your horses?"

DRIVER—"Well you see, sir, my dog's gettin' fat, and he's follerin' behind. Exercise does him good; but if I drive too fast he can't keep up with us."

## HOLDING HIS OWN.

WIFE (*sarcastically, to husband coming home at five in the morning*)—"Home already, my dear? Why you are early!"

HUSBAND—"Yes, my love; but I didn't care about staying any later, it was getting dull."



## OLD FRENCH METRES.\*

BY R. K. MUNKITTRICK.

## COME BACK.

(RONDEL.)

Come back, O happy dream,  
With pleasure flood my soul,  
The golden past doth seem  
Before me to unroll.

When once we used to stroll  
Beside the woodland stream—  
Come back, oh happy dream,  
With pleasure flood my soul.

Thine eyes most tender beam,  
Thy kisses (on the whole)  
Eclipsed the luscious cream  
I purchased by the bowl.  
Come back, O happy dream,  
With pleasure flood my soul.

## "THY HAND RESTS IN MINE."

(VILLANELLE.)

Thy hand rests in mine,  
The night's calm and clear—  
Ah! transport divine.

My lips turn to thine,  
I float to Love's sphere—  
Thy hand rests in mine.

My love, I'd resign  
For thee all things dear—  
Ah! transport divine.

That for thee I pine  
Is not very queer—  
Thy hand rests in mine.

My arms round thee twine,  
And heaven seems near—  
Ah, transport divine!

My soul's steeped in wine  
(Or, if thou wilt, beer).  
Thy hand rests in mine—  
Ah! transport divine.

## "SWEET X. Y. Z."

(RONDEAU.)

Sweet X. Y. Z., thy features fair,  
Thy soft alluring golden hair,  
Thine eyes that amorously wink,  
Thy lips that wear the dainty pink  
Which budding summer roses wear,

Are very lovely I declare;  
And, sweet, I'd know enchantment rare,  
If in my arms thou'dst loving sink,  
Sweet X. Y. Z.

Thou smilest on me, yet, I swear,  
Thou frownest, too. I hardly dare  
To dream that e'er our loves we'll link.  
Of nonsense soft indeed I think  
I've said enough—don't you, ma chère,  
Sweet X. Y. Z.?

## EDITOR AND POET.

(TRIOLET.)

"Though your ode to a butterfly  
Is charmingly chaste and gentle,"  
Saith the editor with a sigh:  
"Though your ode to a butterfly  
Is good, I regret—" golden lie,  
He cares not a continental,  
Though your ode to a butterfly  
Is charmingly chaste and gentle.

## THE BALLAD OF IDEALS.

(BALLADE.)

Fair Reader (all readers are "gentle" or "fair"),  
Though Poesy finds in my heart a warm nest,  
And naught but the beautiful, dainty and rare  
I have in my castle of dreams as a guest,  
Though themes unromantic my mind ne'er molest,  
And only what's lovely my fancy elates,  
A ripple of melody wakes in my breast  
When I hear the sweet jingle of saucers and plates.

And Painting, oh, with you there's naught can compare:  
I worship Millais, Meissonier and the rest;  
I fondly admire my sweet Lady Clare,  
In flowers and garments of gossamer drest;  
I like the warm glow of a strawberry west,  
When a faint iris bridges the heavenly gates—  
But colors far richer my visions invest  
When I hear the sweet jingle of saucers and plates.

Oh Music, dispeller of sorrow and care,  
Enchantress that ministers to the deprest,  
With soft golden raptures you lighten me e'er,  
And waft me afar to the realms of the blest;  
But, ah, let me say that I like you far best  
When you wake 'neath those soft snowy fingers of Kate's;  
But of transport diviner my soul seems possess,  
When I hear the sweet jingle of saucers and plates.

ENVOI.

Poets, and ye who are ever in quest  
Of pleasure which classical appetite sates,  
Oh, never pretend you are shocked or distressed,  
When you hear the sweet jingle of saucers and plates.

## PUCK'S COMEDY-STORIES.

V.

## THE LATE LAMENTED.

Adapted from the French of O. FEUILLET, by H. C. BUNNER.

(CONTINUED.)

CHAMPFLEURY (*remonstrant*).  
What! For a trifle like that—for a daisy—  
a mere inadvertence. (*Flirting with the parrot  
on JULIE's finger*) Chick, chick, chick! Pretty  
Poll—psst!

JULIE.

There, now—he is teasing my bird! Pray,  
sir, what cause of complaint have you against  
my poor parrot? What has he done to you?

CHAMPFLEURY.

My dear, it is not the parrot I complain of  
—but the perch has treated me cruelly.

JULIE.

Ah! you are going to get yourself bitten—  
and I shall be delighted. Bite him, Fiammetta!

CHAMPFLEURY (*retiring*).

But what have I done to you, Marquise, to  
merit this rigor? Tell me. Yesterday you  
pointed me out, as meet and fitting prey, to  
your estimable friend—the monkey—and, by  
the way, he has not forgotten your kindness,  
for I have just escaped strangling at his hands,  
and now, to-day, you recommend me to the  
tender mercies of Fiammetta. To-morrow you  
will probably hand me over to the dogs. In  
short, you want my blood—you desire that my  
gore should flow. And why? Not because—  
we will be frank about it—because of a little  
Lisette who troubles your mind no more than  
she does mine—but because I love you; because  
I have told you so, and because you see me here  
ready to tell you so once more.

JULIE.

One thing that I do not comprehend, sir, is  
the cause of the visit with which you have  
honored me this morning. There is something  
mysterious in it—to me, your coming here. You

would scarcely take so novel and so—unwise a  
step, without furnishing yourself with some  
plausible pretext. I thought at first that you  
had come to give me some piece of important  
news—or something interesting. But not at all.  
Here you have been, for the last half-hour,  
standing in my light, and carrying on a con-  
versation, to put it gently, desultory in style,  
and in the highest degree—stupid. Will you  
kindly tell me, briefly, what it is you wish.

CHAMPFLEURY (*briefly, as requested*).

Nothing, Madame.

JULIE.

Very well, then, sir . . . .

She indicates, by an eloquent gesture, the open door.  
The MARQUIS makes a move in that direction, but checks  
himself, returns and gazes fixedly at the scornful queen of  
the boudoir. She returns the compliment. The MARQUIS  
resumes the conversation in a dry, precise and business-  
like tone.

Do you think, Madame, that this kind of  
thing is going to continue as a permanent  
arrangement?

JULIE (*ostentatiously nonchalante*).

What kind of thing?

CHAMPFLEURY (*with growing severity*).

There are many men, Madame la Marquise,  
who in my place would take this matter far less  
amiably.

JULIE (*axiomatically*).

There are a great many very foolish people  
in the world.

CHAMPFLEURY.

Very well, if you choose to regard it in that  
light. But you will admit, perhaps, that, in  
view of the fact that we have been married,  
now, for over six months, the terms on which  
we are living are, to say the least, singular.

JULIE.

I am perfectly willing to admit the fact—if  
it will give you any pleasure.

CHAMPFLEURY (*approaching*).

Then . . . then—oh, my dear Marquise, I  
wish you had had, this morning, the happy in-  
spiration with which I was blessed, and had  
taken, as I did, a little excursion into the  
country.

JULIE (*puzzled*).

And why, pray?

CHAMPFLEURY (*gravely*).

Because I am certain that there is a spirit in  
you, though you know it not, that would have  
responded to the happy beauty of the morning  
—a chord in your heart that would have echoed  
the springtime song of the birds. Yes, indeed,  
you may laugh, but there is far more than you  
think in these subtle influences. I have never  
suspected myself of pastoral proclivities; but I  
had to yield to the fact. As I rode along the  
highway, between the long lines of blossoming  
trees, and looked through the boughs over the  
soft green fields, and felt the fresh, pure air on  
my cheeks, I felt—I felt . . . .

JULIE (*mockingly*).

How?

CHAMPFLEURY (*recovering himself*).

As I wished you could feel. For there was  
one grace about the morning, one charm to  
which my heart has long been a stranger—  
happiness. Everything under the bright, blue  
sky was joyous—not a face that I saw but wore  
a smile, not a peasant on the road but sung his  
song of love, not a girl at her cottage-door but  
had a ribbon in her hair and a laugh on her  
lips. I alone—I felt myself out of place in this  
paradise—I alone had no share in the joy I saw  
all about me.

JULIE.

At least you had no ribbon in your hair.

CHAMPFLEURY (*unheeding the interruption*).

My pain was sincere, Madame la Marquise,  
and serious. I felt weighing on my heart the  
solitude through which I had passed, and that

\* We refer our readers for a short treatise on these  
"Metres" to another part of this paper. ED. PUCK.



to which I was about to return. What was it I wanted, I asked myself, to take my part in this sweet harmony of happiness? What was it for which my soul longed—for which it longs now? (*He draws nearer and speaks with fervor.*) What was it? One single word of tenderness—one hand whose pressure should answer mine—one heart to beat with a common thought, to share the same tender illusion. O Julie!—I thought of you, of your beauty that haunts me night and day, of your perfect loveliness of youth, of this strange charm that enshrines you like the aureole of an angel—I thought of you, and I could not believe that this marvelous statue would remain forever cold and dumb. It seemed then, to my poor, foolish, confident heart, that if I were near you—by your side—I should find a word—a tone—a look—a tear, perhaps, to touch you. Julie, was I mistaken?

He has dropped on one knee by the side of the MARQUISE, and takes her hand and lifts it to his lips as he watches her face. For an instant she hesitates, looking down at him, from under her drooping lashes. Then she coldly withdraws her hand, and the suppliant hears his answer in the chill of unpitiful coquetry:

JULIE.

Thank you, it's very charming, all that, but you appear to have forgotten that I wish to have my room to myself. Will you be so good, when you go out—as soon as possible—to send me my maid—the pretty daisy with the ribbon in her hair—you know her?

The MARQUIS makes no answer. He rises abruptly and gives his wife one searching glance. But she avoids his eye; and he turns toward the door, silent and dignified, and, with a low bow, is gone.

[To be continued.]

## And We Took Her Home.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LOVEL."

(Concluded.)

"I'LL tell you what it is," she announced gayly, when we were pacing, some three or four of us, together along the broad sunny walk at the bottom of the garden. "This Miss Liston is an old dragon, and bullied her when she was a small child, and she hasn't forgotten her child's fear of her. I dare say she half expects to have her ears boxed if she should happen to offend. The good lady looks quite capable of doing it on provocation."

"Have you seen her again?" I asked eagerly.

"Oh, dear, yes—half a dozen times, when I've been going to and fro, and her door has chanced to be open. Just now I encountered her on the stairs, but she took no notice of me, and I made myself as small as I could. I was afraid of sharing your fate, Jenny."

It was a half holiday that day, and we were all going to the common beyond the town—all, that is, but Annette, who was to stay in and draw up the school report. Mrs. Frant usually undertook this work herself, but to-day she had an engagement, and she had desired Annette to make out the forms. We were all in the hall ready for our start, and Mrs. Frant, who was going part of the way with us, was unfolding her shawl, when Annette, coming out of the schoolroom, offered to put it across her shoulders. She would have done so indeed had not Mrs. Frant almost pushed her back.

"Don't," she said, and the word sounded almost like a cry; "I can do it myself—I would rather."

Annette drew back and her color rose. Good-humored as she was, it could not be pleasant to get such a rebuff as that; but she kept her temper and silently retreated to the schoolroom. Just then I, standing near the foot of the stairs, heard the rustle of a silk dress, and

glancing up I saw the gray head and lilac cap of Miss Liston on the landing above. She had evidently heard Mrs. Frant's exclamation, and had come out of her room to see what it meant. She was looking down at her niece with an expression so fixed and so peculiar that it quite startled me. But Mrs. Frant did not see her, and the next moment she had disappeared. It was nearly dark when we came in from our ramble, and it was a good half-hour later when we saw Mrs. Frant walk slowly up the flagged path to the house; but she did not come into the schoolroom, and Miss Benson and Annette were again in charge. The younger girls were playing noisily, and I and two or three others were reading as well as we could amidst the hubbub. Suddenly Miss Benson, going over to the long chiffonier, uttered an ejaculation:

"Dear me! Why, Mrs. Frant has forgotten her keys; here they are, hanging in the lock."

Her amazement was natural, for Mrs. Frant was especially careful about her private keys. I had never seen them out of her hands before. Miss Benson stood for a moment considering, and then turned to Annette.

"You had better take them up at once, and tell her where I found them."

But for once Annette hung back. "Won't you send some one else?" she asked. "I think it is pretty plain Mrs. Frant would rather not see me oftener than she can help."

After what we had seen that afternoon, Miss Benson could not gainsay this, so she turned to me, as I happened to be nearest to her.

"Here, then, Jenny, you go," she said impatiently.

I thought it rather hard that I should have to run the gauntlet of Miss Liston a second time, but it was useless to grumble; so I took the keys, and crossed the hall to the drawing-room. The door stood open, and no one was there. Thinking that Mrs. Frant might be in her own room I ran up-stairs. My knock was unanswered, but as I waited listening I caught a sound of low voices in the little music-room beyond. I hesitated, much inclined to go down without fulfilling my errand; but reflecting that I should probably be sent again, I stepped along the passage, and tapped gently at the closed door. As I did so, I heard these words, uttered in a low emphatic voice, within:

"You have put yourself in my hands, remember. If you want to betray—"

The end of the sentence was broken off, and another voice—Mrs. Frant's—called out sharply,

"Who's there?"

"It is me—Jenny Lucas," I responded timidly, wishing myself miles away; "Miss Benson sent me."

She came to the door, and opened it a very little way.

"I have brought your keys. They were left in the chiffonier," I explained. "Miss Benson thought you would wish to have them."

Mrs. Frant held out her hand. I think she tried to speak, but if so no words came. Then she pushed to the door again, and I went back to the schoolroom.

But as I went I recalled the strange stories I had heard about her, and I wondered whether this could be true, and whether Miss Liston or Annette were mixed up with them in some secret way. When I was at home again I would tell my mother everything, and ask her opinion. It was better not to talk to my schoolfellows, for I knew that I was more observant and fanciful than they. And I should soon be at home now. Most of the girls were leaving next day, but my mother could not well send for me till Saturday, so I should be among the last to go. There was a grand confusion when Friday morning came. Drawers were turned out, music was sorted, and trunks were packed, with now and then a pause for good-byes, as

one or another departed. I was helping Janet Rock to squeeze an impossible number of things into her box when Annette, coming into the room, threw down a bundle of rugs, and said abruptly:

"I may be glad of your services too, Jenny; I'm off to-morrow."

"You!" I exclaimed. "What! are you going after all?"

"Yes; and going for good too. You'd best look at me well, for you won't see much more of me."

I was indeed staring at her with all my might, for her face contradicted her would-be careless tone.

"If Mrs. Frant wanted to get rid of me," she proceeded, "she's certainly gone the right way to work. I've stood a good deal of snubbing, but it went a little too far yesterday. I told her so just now."

"And what did she say?" asked I, open-mouthed.

"She didn't seem to know quite what to say, and she looked over at Miss Liston—she had come in while I was speaking—and Miss Liston kindly observed that it surely did not matter much whether I went or stayed. So that settled the question, you see, and to-morrow morning I turn my back on Brook House."

Janet and I were loud in our lamentations, but she could not stop to hear them, for she was wanted everywhere at once. The whole day she was fetching and carrying, and by the evening she was so tired that she fell asleep with her arms crossed on the table, and only half woke up at bedtime. We were a very shabby party the next morning. Only three of us girls were left, and even Miss Benson had gone off, escorting a pair of little West Indians. The two Olivers were to start northward at eleven, and the dear old carriage might come for me at any minute; so Annette, who did not leave till noon, would probably be the last of all. As we stood round watching her deftly stowing away her various goods, she told us something of her plans. She was going to stay with her half-sister in London until she learnt her stepfather's wishes. No doubt he would be angry, but that couldn't be helped; he had often been angry before.

"You don't seem to mind much," I observed, handing her some books that I had been holding.

"No; I always take things easily; it's my nature."

I was rather disappointed that she cared so little about leaving us; but after all, as she said, it was her nature to take things easily, and she had not known us long. She would go somewhere else, to be as gay and serviceable and pleasant as she had been here.

"Shall I tell you why I think Mrs. Frant did not like you?" I said to her confidentially, when the last straps had been fastened, and we were standing, equipped for our respective journeys, at the window of the now empty schoolroom. It was drawing very near twelve; the Olivers had gone, and I was watching for the white noses of our horses.

"Yes, do," she said, laughing; "it needs explanation, doesn't it?"

"Well, you are like some one she once knew. She told me so."

"Am I?" said Annette, pondering. "I wonder who it could have been!"

"I don't know, but I fancied, from her way, that it was some one she did not care to remember."

There was a distant rattle of wheels, and we pushed up the window-sash and craned out. No, it was not our familiar green panels; it was an empty fly for Annette.

"You'll be last, after all," she said, as we went out together into the hall. "I hope you won't have long to wait."



Mrs. Frant was there. She had come down, I suppose, to bid Annette good-bye, but she hardly seemed to know what she was doing, and she looked as white as a sheet. When Annette had shaken hands with her, she turned to me.

"Good-bye, Jenny," she said. "I wonder if we shall ever meet again?"

She did not offer to kiss me. Caresses had not been in her way, for all her friendliness.

"You had better go, child," Mrs. Frant said to me faintly; but I did not stir, for I did not quite take in her meaning.

Annette was moving towards the door when some one else just behind me said:

"You have not wished me good-bye, Miss Merivale."

I started, and Annette faced round. Miss Liston was standing in the doorway of the drawing-room, and she now came forward with an outstretched hand.

Annette took it at once.

"I didn't see you," she explained, in her easy way.

"No?" said Miss Liston. She was still holding the girl's hand. What *did* she mean by that steady gaze—that significant smile? I glanced round for Mrs. Frant, but she had vanished. One of the maids had just brought down Annette's box; no one else was in sight. I felt a terrified foreboding that *something* was going to happen; but what? Did Annette share it? She had changed color, and I think she tried to release herself; but Miss Liston did not relax her grasp.

"We have seen so little of each other," she said, in a bland deliberate voice, "and I have such a high opinion of your talents, that I think I really must ask you to delay your departure for a little while, that we may become better acquainted. Mary," looking over her shoulder to the maid, "you may take Miss Merivale's box up-stairs again to my room; and then you may tell the flyman to wait a bit. We are not quite ready for him yet."

Mary looked stupefied. Annette had freed herself now, and had made a step forward. What she was going to do or say I cannot guess; I was absorbed in observing Miss Liston. The old lady had moved briskly forward, so as to place herself between Annette and the door; and now, still eying her with the same cool smile, she took off her cap and with it the bands of white hair which I had so much admired, and, tossing them on the floor, revealed the bald head of an elderly man. Crossing his arms, this same man addressed the girl, who stood as if turned to stone, in these astounding words:

"The game is up with you, you see. It has been a good game, but two can play at it, and I flatter myself I've checkmated you rather neatly."

Annette laughed a short odd laugh; but the color had come back to her face, and she was herself again.

"Perhaps you'll explain," she said composedly; "perhaps you'll favor me with your name, because, you see, this is rather a surprise, and I don't think I've the pleasure of knowing you."

"No; that is a pleasure to come. I'm Inspector Webb from Scotland Yard, at your service. But I'll do something more to oblige you. I'll remind you of *your* name, Miss Agatha Minton, in case you chance to have forgotten it."

"Bah! the game is up, then," and Annette glanced hastily round, as if for some way of escape.

"Ay, but we'll play it out, if you please," returned the detective, stepping promptly forward and linking his arm in his prisoner's. "Mary, my good girl, when you've taken that box up-stairs; please to call the boy whom I

saw working in the garden just now. You're too slippery a customer, Miss Minton, for one pair of hands, especially when they've other work to do. And I must just overhaul that box of yours. I fancy, if I only look closely enough, I may find a document that would prove useful to a gentleman over the water."

The girl regarded him boldly. "Find what you can," she said. "I'm sure you're welcome to turn over everything there."

"Ah, you think it won't strike me to look between the boards of your French dictionary. Well, and I daresay it wouldn't if I hadn't watched you split the cover and then gum it together again. It's astonishing how much one can see through a hole a quarter of an inch square in a wooden partition."

Annette, or Agatha, as I ought to call her, shrugged her shoulders. "I'm trapped! Well, I took my chance," she muttered.

"Yes, I thought you'd rise to those keys," pursued the detective, with evident enjoyment, as he led her towards the stairs; "and you see how kindly anxious I was to smooth all difficulties away for you. No one at home but an old lady; dispatch box ready to hand. All fair sailing. And it worked out so beautifully too. You'd no notion when you planned to go off in a huff that you were playing right into my hands."

I heard no more. Sick and stunned I crept into the schoolroom, dreading I knew not what. I could not stay there, it was too desolate, and I stole out again across the now deserted hall to the drawing-room. There, crouching over the fire and shivering as if in an ague fit, I found Mrs. Frant. She lifted her head in affright, but bowed it again when she saw that it was only me.

"Child, child," she said feebly, "you ought not to be here. I had forgotten you. I thought you had gone. You ought not to have seen."

"Tell me," I entreated, creeping up to her, and slipping my hand in hers in a nervous longing for protection. "What does it mean? I can't understand it."

She was silent; but I, rendered bold by very terror, repeated, "Tell me; do tell me."

"I had better tell you, perhaps," she murmured, "since you were here and saw. And yet I don't know," and she pressed her hand wearily to her brow. Just then the street-door bell rang again. I listened and heard a voice—a dear familiar voice—and in an instant I was in the hall and in my mother's arms.

"O mother, come in here!" and, almost dragging her into the schoolroom, I poured out my story. She heard it with a grave and pitying face.

"Let us go in to poor Mrs. Frant," she said, when I had done; and together we went across to the other room. Mrs. Frant still sat as I had left her, but her sad eyes brightened a little when she saw my mother. She knew her well, and knew how gentle and kind she was.

My mother sat down beside her and took her trembling hand.

"Do you care to tell us anything?" she said softly. "Jenny is to be trusted, but don't speak if it is painful to you."

"Yes, I will tell you; it will be a comfort to speak. And you know something; you know about him—my husband—and how cruelly he used me."

"Indeed I do!" my mother made answer.

"When I got away from him and took shelter with my aunt in Paris, he followed me there, and threatened to drag me back with him. He could have done it too. I could not prove his ill-usage; he had been too crafty for that. But there was a letter; he had written it in our early married days. He didn't know I had kept it, but he knew that, and I knew, if it were produced, it would send him to prison, and I told him that if he meddled

with me I would produce it. I had never turned on him before. I had been like a whipped hound under his hand; but now I was desperate, and I frightened him. He made me promise solemnly never to use that letter as long as he did not molest me; and then he left me. He knew he could trust my word. And then I came to England, and, ill and broken as I was, I tried to begin a new life."

"And you did," said my mother tenderly. "You have done bravely."

"I thought it was all past, that dreadful time, and that some day I might almost forget it. It was twelve years ago, you know. But he—my husband—must have heard about the money my cousin left me last year, and he wanted to get a hold on me again. You see, if he had once got the letter, I and my money would have been at his mercy."

"I see," said my mother. "Yes. Now I begin to understand."

"And so he sent this girl—his niece—to steal it quietly. I had never seen her or heard of her. I thought it was only a chance likeness I saw until I met the detective at Hatherfield."

"And he told you?"

"He told me her real name, and that was enough. He said he had been looking for a girl—Agatha Minton—who had been mixed up in a Rotterdam fraud, and that, after a deal of trouble, he had tracked her down into our neighborhood; had lighted on her photograph in a Hatherfield shop-window, and found that she was a governess here. And then I had something to tell him. My husband's sister had married a man named Minton, and I guessed at once that this girl had not come to my house only to hide. I used not to be suspicious, but my husband had taught me to suspect him."

She paused and sighed heavily.

"And what did you do?" my mother asked, stroking the hand that clung to hers.

"I did not know what to do; I could hardly even think. I wanted Mr. Webb to come back with me and take her away at once; but he wouldn't. He said his other case against her wasn't as clear as it might be, and that if this business were properly handled it might help him a good deal. I must let him manage it his own way. And then he considered a little, and asked me if I had any elderly relations who were not known in our village; and when I told him of my aunt he laughed and explained his plan. It was a dreadful plan to me. I did not know how to bear the waiting and the risk. It made me shudder to think of letting her—that girl—get hold of the paper on which all my peace depended. I knew it was safe so far; I had seen it in my strong box that morning. But Mr. Webb would not listen to me; he said he'd warrant it not to leave my house, and I was in his hands. I was forced to let him have his own way."

"And it was a very good way," my mother put in cheerfully.

"Do you think so? Oh, if only I could be sure; but I have suffered so much it seems now as if I hadn't strength to believe or to bear."

As she spoke the door opened again, and Mr. Webb came in, habited now in a blue frock-coat. Walking up to her, he put a folded letter into her outstretched hand.

"You see I have kept my word," he said, with a grim smile; "there it is. Won't you own that it is safer than it has ever been? And now I must go and see my bird safe in her cage."

As he turned away, Mrs. Frant hid her face upon my mother's shoulder and broke into a passion of tears, the first she had shed. She tried to speak, but her sobs choked her. The strain had been too great, and she was past feeling the relief. My mother saw how it was.



She did not attempt to calm her. She only said:

"Come home with us. You are not fit to stay alone in this gloomy empty house. Come home with us."

*And we took her home.*

[END.]



### Puck's Exchanges.

THE writ of oyster goes into effect May 1st.—*Phil. Bulletin.*

WHEN a man talks of moving he expects to hire a haul.—*Picayune.*

AN expert can tell if the man at the other end of the telephone eats onions.—*Unknown Ex.*

A MAN may be a teetotaler, and yet partake of the spirit of the times.—*Danielsonville Sentinel.*

THERE is a lumber dealer in Utica whose board-bill last week was \$3,200.—*Utica Observer.*

THE Administration has returned from her visit to Ohio. She's got a new bonnet.—*Boston Post.*

ENGLAND may be "mistress of the Cs," but she has never yet been able to fairly master the Hs.—*N. Y. Mail.*

THE aerophone can call a boy louder than any mother, but can't do for him after he dodges into the gate as a mother can.—*Stray Squib.*

IT is to be hoped that the Tilttons won't reunite just yet. Such stories will come so handy during the midsummer dullness.—*Worcester Press.*

A HOUSEKEEPER says: "Scalded skimmed milk will go as far as fresh milk." If it will only stay there it has permission to go a great deal farther.—*Picayune.*

A LITTLE Florida boy tamed an alligator, and the ugly reptile learned to like the little fellow—not, however, until the little fellow was all gone.—*Worcester Press.*

PARSNIPS, it is said, greatly enrich the milk of a cow. We advise our milkmen to try the effect of this vegetable upon the pump handle.—*Philadelphia Kronikle-Herald.*

EX-CONGRESSMAN VANCE, of Ohio, and the pretty wife of a music teacher, are the last to join the innumerable caravan that has gone to hunt Charley Ross.—*Oil City Derrick.*

THE report of the inspector shows clearly who is responsible for the unseaworthy Metropolis leaving port. It is therefore high time to drop this matter.—*Oil City Derrick.*

A SCIENTIFIC question worthy the attention of Darwin is, "Did the potency and power of white spots on the finger nails exist in the nebular hypothesis?"—*New Orleans Times.*

J. MADISON WELLS proposes to sue the *Times* for libel. Look here, J. Madison, if this journal didn't say you stole mules and murdered a man, it is sorry for it.—*Philadelphia Kronikle-Herald.*

"I'm crazy, am I?" said old man Lord as the recent Mrs. Hicks tucks a napkin under his chin, cuts up his meat and butters the bread for him, with an affectionate caution to be careful he doesn't choke again; "then I hope to gracious I'll stay so. That's the kind of a Methuseler I am."—*Breakfast Table.*

COL. VALENTINE BAKER has been taken back to society and all the clubs. The man who grossly insults an English lady must wait one year before he can be restored to good society.—*Free Press.*

"I AM an American Congressman," shrieks Carter Harrison, of Illinois. Oh, that's no matter, Mr. H. People won't think any the less of you, so long as you behave yourself.—*N. Y. Com. Adv.*

IT matters not what kind of a dog a man may be leading home with a string. It may be a blue-and-gray cur or a brindle bull pup, yet he always says with pride that the dog is half black and tan.—*New York Herald.*

IT has been decreed that man should earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, and the man of genius with a bulging brow cannot escape, though he may put in a good deal of time with his relatives.—*Picayune.*

SOME papers are much distressed over the summer outlook. They see the mob, bearing the red flag, rioting and wading in blood ankle deep. It is nonsense. The people want quiet, and want it so badly that they will fight for it if necessary.—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

OH, ye vaporous beings and small swimmers! Is nothing sacred from the voracious maw of the patent medicine man? Here's one of our little waifs, that cost four sleepless nights, harnessed to an advertisement that will rob the widow and orphan and hornswoggle the bowed patriarch and the silver-haired matron. Roll on, ye dark waters; come, sweet oblivion, come!—*Breakfast Table.*



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To supply the demand for the above-named illustration, depicting the "Mormon's Empty Pillow," and owing to the fact that the edition of "Puck" containing it has been entirely exhausted, the cartoon has been published as a single sheet, and can be obtained from any newsdealer in the country.

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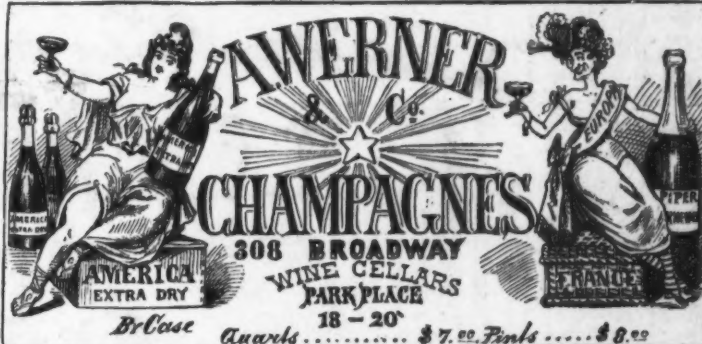
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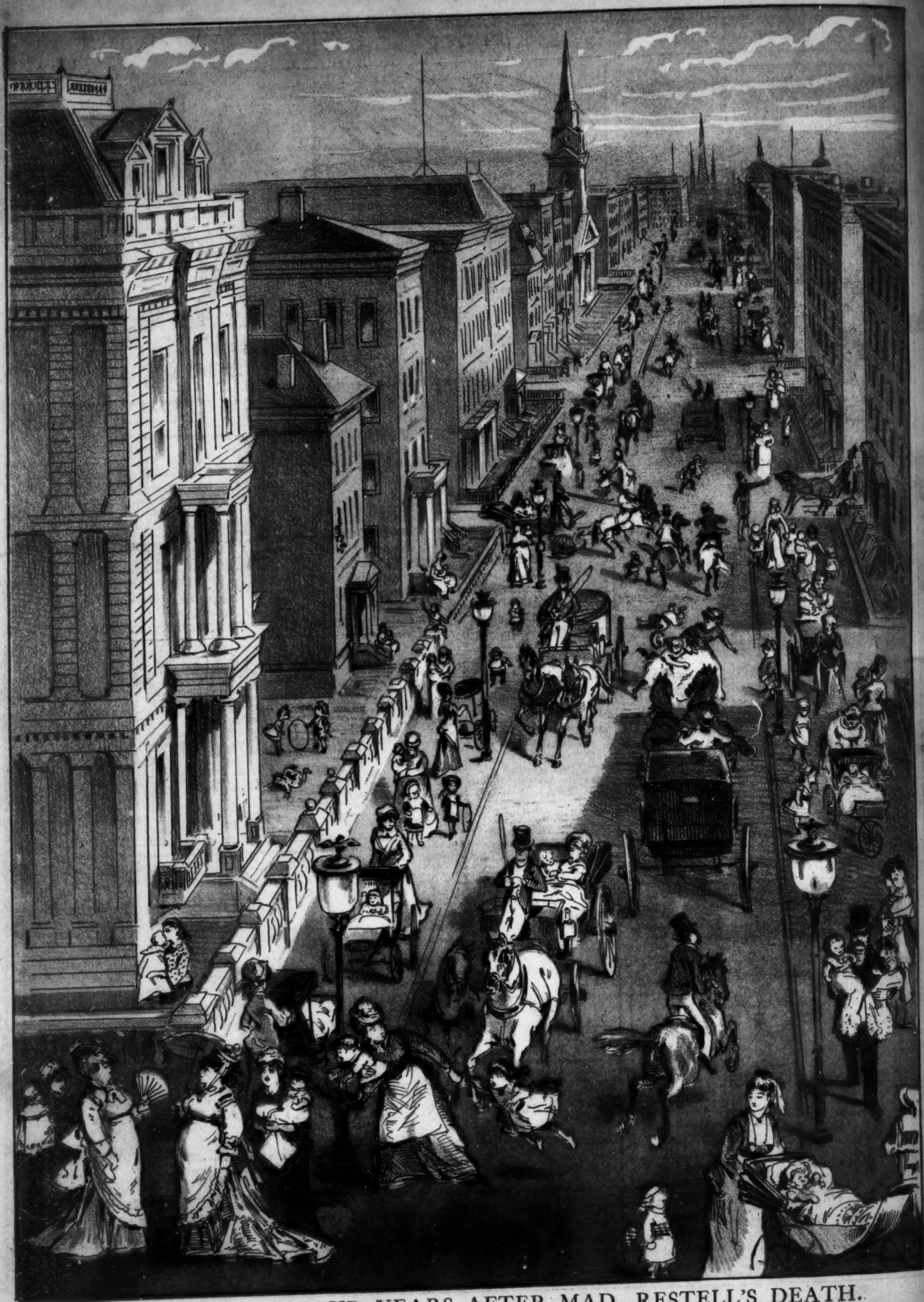
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